

Pushing to the Front of the Pack

Connecting Technology,
Communications,
Marketing and Admissions



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to the

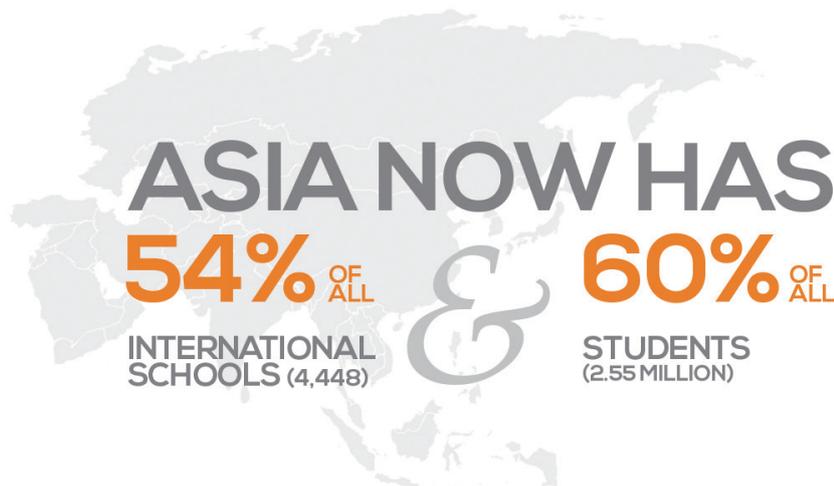
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International schools have become popular choices for parents looking for quality education for their children in cities around the world – education that will serve them well in a rapidly changing world through technology and globalization. This growing market has offered professionals across domains the chance to work in some of the most amazing countries in the world, and to work alongside inspirational educators and leadership teams with their own rich, diverse backgrounds. In being connected to these growing networks, we see the dynamic change occurring in schools, and, when the right opportunities are given, driving innovation for the schools of the future.

The same growth that has drawn our attention to this market has also drawn the attention of private enterprise like never before, and resulted in the emergence of schools of every variety and quality.

The 2016 [International School Consultancy (ISC)] Research Global Report states that the number of English-medium K-12 schools (which includes British and American schools overseas, and British independent schools abroad) has increased by 41.5% in the past five years to a current total of 8,257. The number of students attending international schools is now over 4.3 million; a 45.9% growth in just five years. Asia (including Western Asia; the Middle East) has seen the greatest increase in students during this time with a 55.7% growth. Asia now has 54% of all international schools (4,448) and 60% of all students (2.55 million).¹



The rapid expansion of the international school market has left the best schools suddenly checking themselves and new schools in a fight for attention they desperately need to grab a foothold in this ever increasingly competitive atmosphere. So competitive is the market worldwide, that ISC reported this year that tuition rates had dropped for the fourth year in a row, and sit (a modest) 0.2% lower than they were in 2011. The market continues to expand, however, marking a growth of 45.9% over the past five years.¹

What does this tell us? It tells us that more schools are being built, and are then in competition for the growing parent body turning to international education, but also for some of the existing parents too. In Beijing, for example, it is not uncommon for families to switch between schools, or for one family to have one child at school A, and another at school B, according to which is the better fit for that particular child.

In our work with schools in Europe, the Middle East and Asia, we have been given a backstage pass to one of the most dynamic, innovative and competitive international school markets in the world. While each organization we have worked with has their own vision and direction and share of the market, each shares common challenges in pushing to the front of the pack when it comes to finding ways to present themselves in the best possible light.

¹ www.iscresearch.com/information/isc-news.aspx



Are we considering the **parent** and **student experience** from both the **education** and **business** points of view?

In the face of the realities of the market, both time-tested and newly-established schools must ask themselves very pointed questions:

For Technology & EdTech Integration:

- Are we leveraging the abundance and convergence of technology in our daily lives to transform both communication and education?
- Is our school community ready to embrace the challenges of the 21st century?
 - Are we supporting collaboration?
 - Are we flexible in our platforms and application of technologies?
- Are we building understanding and capacity to differentiate between fad and genuine innovation?

For Admissions and Communications:

- Are we communicating the strengths of our institutions in a way that will allow parents to feel what an education in our school is like?
- Are we sharing the big and the small stories that make our school communities special?
- Are we encouraging everyone in our community to be creators of content, and to share their favorites?
- Are we connecting with parents before, during and after they come to our schools?
- Are we considering the parent and student experience from both an education and business point of view?

In consideration of these questions, Wildfire Solutions argues that school leadership teams must think about what they offer as an experience - one that is different for each of the stakeholders: students, parents, staff and guests.

- What is it like to come to our school?
- Is the physical space inviting and engaging?
- Are our digital environments sophisticated yet user friendly?
- What can we do better? Have we made sure the different perspectives have been heard?

Schools should be looking to find examples in leading institutions that take a holistic approach to systems and management – one where department heads from Technology, Communications (including Marketing) and Admissions are all at the leadership table to improve the experience offered in our school communities.

So, **where** should we **begin**?



Keep reading, or jump to the last page of this brochure for to do a quick-start self assessment of your school's IT, EdTech and Communications position.



WILDFIRE SOLUTIONS

Wildfire Solutions was created from an understanding of the importance of communications and technology solutions for schools and small businesses. With a combined thirty-plus years in education and business, Andrew Walton and Muhammad Azeem have joined forces, bringing their experience, skills, energy and powerful professional network to schools and small-to-medium sized enterprises around the world. With hubs in China and the UAE, Wildfire has positioned itself to serve the world's largest international schools markets and most dynamic business centers.

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info@wildfire.tech **ideas ignited**



Why Wildfire

Wildfire Solutions provides schools and SMEs with the edge they need in today's competitive environments. We bring our passion, skills and experience to the development and implementation of tailored tech infrastructure, EdTech and digital brand solutions.

What We Do

Wildfire brings ideas to life. We provide customized and scalable solutions based upon best practices in education, business, technology and communications. We build remarkable partnerships with our clients and achieve outstanding results.

How We Work

With an understanding of each client's background, future plans and ideas for growth, Wildfire projects begin with clear requirements and objectives that set the stage for success. Working closely with our clients, we engage our considerable resources and wide reaching professional network to deliver solutions that get noticed.

Working with Wildfire Solutions

Wildfire works with each client to design and build solutions tailored to align with their organization's vision and strategic planning. Building on solid, future ready, scalable IT infrastructure, Wildfire develops platforms upon which business and educational technology programs can be delivered.

Our Consultancy Models:

Audits

Audits generally take place over a 2-5 day period of engagement, allowing sufficient time for a professional evaluation of the organization's IT infrastructure, EdTech program, Communications systems and/or Marketing presence, as well as their impact on the school's market position, educational programs and administrative productivity. The process involves discussions on the needs of the school followed by a brief proposal. Audits are carried out on schedule written in an official agreement and proposed project schedule, and a full audit report is submitted within a week of our visit.

A fixed daily consultancy rate is charged for the audit's duration.

Short Term Consultancies

Consultancy contracts are designed to last no more than three months with an agreed number of days on site, while also involving off site work by the consultant(s). The goals of the project are based on the needs of the school, which are discussed and documented in no more than two short 'discovery' meetings with the school management and relevant teams/committees. A detailed proposal is then submitted for the school to review and confirm. This proposal outlines the project's goals, process(es) and timeline to achieving success. Work starts on a schedule agreed in the proposal after an official agreement is signed. A complete project report is submitted within two weeks of completion and a follow up 'impact and outcome' meeting is arranged no later than six months after the project completion.

A flat consultancy fee is charged for this model. The fee is based on the detail and amount of work required. In some cases, applying a daily consultancy rate may be more cost effective to the school and we will discuss this with you when evaluating project costs.

Long Term Consultancies

Long Term Consultancies are proposed when working with you on design, planning and implementation of large-scale projects such as opening a new school building, refurbishment of IT infrastructure, development of a major school system or design and implementation of a marketing campaign. As such, the Long Term Consultancy model is suggested for projects involving the development of whole school strategies which not only include review and streamlining of existing systems and support mechanisms but also working on development of new systems and planning for their integration within the school's educational and business programs.

After at least two and a maximum of five 'discovery' meetings, a detailed proposal is submitted to the school with the process(es), timelines, milestones and list of deliverables. With an official agreement signed, Long Term Consultancy projects start as scheduled in the proposal and a follow up 'impact and outcome' meeting is arranged no later than one year after project completion.

A flat consultancy fee is charged for this model. Recognizing budget and cost implications to schools for such consultancies, we work with you to choose the most convenient method of payment suiting your budget & project duration.

Is your Organization Carefully Considering Its Community Experience?

Wildfire strongly believes in the power of leveraging experience and expertise across fields to help our clients realize return on investment. As such, we work closely with expert consultants and partner organizations from a wide professional networks in international education and technology to deliver amazing projects. Get started with Wildfire to develop your organization's signature communications, technology and EdTech solutions.

OUR SERVICES

EDTECH CONSULTANCY Bridging the Divide

The evolution of technology and its increasing impact on our daily lives has influenced the way we receive, analyze, record, manipulate and recall information. As such, schools are increasingly interested in leveraging what technology has to offer. Terms like 21st century skills, blended learning, flipped classrooms, design thinking, digital citizenship, 1:1 or 2:1 technology programs are now discussed and new ideas exchanged in almost every school community and educational conference held.

The path to successful technology integration that aligns with a particular school's vision and strategic goals, however, is complicated. Tested skills, expertise and up to date industry knowledge is required to separate the wheat from the chaff. Wildfire brings you exactly what is required to get your school ready and up to speed with appropriate systems, applications and hands on professional development. With access to key players in the education and technology industries, skills in integration of educational technology in the classroom, and proven experience with EdTech policies, Wildfire Solutions works with your school community (students, parents, educators and administration) to optimize resources that make your school stand out amongst its peers.

Auditing and upgrading or design and implementation of new tech systems and platforms

Planning, design and integration of successful 1:1 and 1:2 BYOD (brand specific or brand independent) technology programs

Design and delivery of world-class, 21st century professional development programs for teachers and students

Planning and designing Maker Space and Maker Ed Projects



TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTIONS Building the Foundations

Technology is so ubiquitous today that organizations often underestimate the importance and complexity of establishing appropriate, reliable infrastructure. 21st century schools must have robust, scalable and dependable systems and platforms upon which they can build their technology-rich, integrated academic programs. Technology infrastructure should be designed to seamlessly support transformative pedagogy with no gaps left for tech frustrations.

Wildfire provides consultations and solutions tailored to the individual needs and long term goals of our clients. Our experience and skills in designing cutting edge data centers with hybrid/cloud computing, scalable networks, effective tech support, end-user device management, printing, VoIP, digital signage and live broadcasts systems brings together industry-leading resources that will push your organization to the front of the pack.

Building school data centers & virtual server environments

Migration to cloud computing with on-site hybrid servers for business-critical systems

Scalable network infrastructure to meet your demands

Management Information and Learning Management Systems (MIS and LMS)

Printing, VoIP, & live broadcast systems



WEB DESIGN Custom Design, Custom Support

A fast, visually appealing and responsive website is a must-have in almost every key industry today. Wildfire websites are built to suit our clients' specific needs and are backed by world-class hosting and support. Having taken the time to discuss your vision and the obstacles you're facing, we design impactful web solutions that meet your needs while impressing your audiences.

Your online presence will be many customers' first impression of your organization. Collaborating with Wildfire ensures that that initial impression is one that both puts your best foot forward and meets the technical and strategic goals you have defined.

Wildfire Solutions will enable you to present your organization with pride and confidence.

Custom design & integrations with social media platforms

Search Engine Optimization (SEO), analytics and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) integration

Features to support your needs, including e-commerce

Flexible hosting and support options including Content Delivery Networks (CDN)



BRAND DEVELOPMENT Putting Your Best Face Forward

Customers don't take your business image lightly, and neither do we. Establishing impactful visual and business identities are crucial steps in establishing a strong statement in the market – both to your customers and to your peers. Send the wrong messages and you set yourself up for wasted time, lost leads and above all, frustration.

Working with Wildfire Solutions takes the stress out of creating or refining a corporate identity. We take time to understand each client's business, their customers and their unique market propositions so we can work with the client to connect the brand to the audience.

Have Wildfire audit your branding, or have us start from scratch building a new corporate identity for your organization – the flexibility is yours. Put our experience in developing visual identity foundations, digital and print style guidelines and templates, asset branding, clothing and merchandise to work for your organization.

- Branding and Visual Identity (VI) Development
- Merchandise and physical assets designed for maximum impact
- Brand exposure planning and implementation across platforms
- Print and social media campaign design



DIGITAL MULTIMEDIA Advanced Production Within Reach

Wildfire provides consultation and finished solutions tailored to meet your specific multimedia needs. From consultation to delivery of complete community engagement packages, which include digital signage, creation studio setup, media hosting and delivery, theater audio-visual design and setup, and more, Wildfire is here for you.

Need a private media server solution? Wildfire offers cloud storage, app development and communication suite implementation that allow your organization to have full control over the media you curate and deliver.

Need hardware to support your programs on site? Wildfire can also design and implement cabling, networking and connectivity solutions for your organization's end user devices, bringing together the best resources in the industry. With our specialized skill set in digital and online media, Wildfire can guide you in sourcing equipment, and even setting up low-cost / high quality studios and creation suites. We can also help with the actual creation of effective digital media for your business.

- On-site needs assessment audits and reporting
- Equipment package design and procurement guidance
- Media server auditing, setup & customization
- On-site training for staff and students



Muhammad Azeem

Muhammad has been in the educational technology profession since 2002 when he started this career at Greenford High School in the UK, where he delivered a successful IT infrastructure expansion project for a new school campus build under the British Government's 'building schools for future' program. This project was highlighted as a model for UK public schools by Dell at BETT (London) in January 2008.

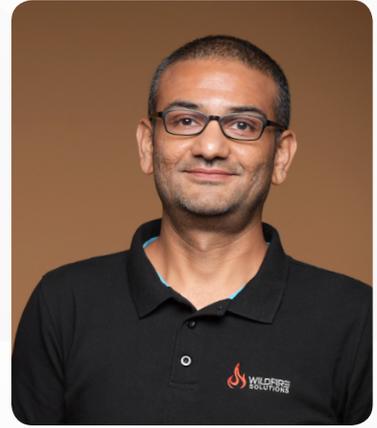
After moving to Beijing with his family in the fall of 2008, Muhammad carried out an IT infrastructure overhaul at The British School of Beijing before its acquisition by the Nord Anglia Group. He then moved to one of Asia's top tier international schools, the Western Academy of Beijing (WAB), renowned for its educational technology program and 'China's first ever' 1:1 Apple laptop program from grade 2 to 12. After his first year as an IT consultant, Muhammad stayed at WAB for four more years as head of IT, assisting senior management in developing and extending technology integration within school programs.

In November 2015 Muhammad began working with ORIGINS Education (Beijing), providing consultation on IT budgeting, infrastructure, design and integration for several new school projects geared towards implementing 21st century technology and educational pedagogies.

Muhammad has not only been successful in reforming 1:1 programs from single brand/device to bring your own device (BYOD) programs, but has also led successful and model implementations

of 1:2 (laptop and tablet) environments.

He has steered several initiatives for integration of educational technologies in existing as well as development of new school programs covering everything from research, vendor selection, pilot trials, budgeting and staff training to working with all stakeholders to ensure that schools meet their targets with a high return on investment, and, more importantly, that they achieve marked improvements in both student learning and staff and parent involvement.



As Wildfire Solutions' Co-Founder and Tech Lead, Muhammad is a staunch believer that school technology infrastructure should be ubiquitous, meticulously-planned, future ready and professionally maintained. Further, Muhammad believes that this infrastructure should be nearly invisible and yet provide a foundation upon which a versatile, strong and engaged learning environment can be built, thus nurturing the development of young learners on their innovative, intrinsically-motivated learning journeys. With school technology systems arranged in this way, Muhammad argues schools can support their own vision and strategic development plans, and allow for successful integration of technologies into the daily lives of both teachers and learners.

Muhammad has not only proven leadership and managerial skills, but also hands-on experience in the delivery of successful IT projects, specializing in:

Auditing and upgrading, or designing and implementing new:

- School data centers: including power and environment management
- Scalable network infrastructure: including high level configurations for routers, switches and WLAN controllers according to the school's needs
- Server hardware and software setup including virtualized and hybrid cloud environments for business-critical systems
- Makerspace/Hackerspace projects
- Centrally managed printing facilities
- VoIP systems
- Security and access control systems
- Digital signage solutions
- Application platforms
 - o Management information systems (MIS), Learning platforms (LMS / VLE), Portals (CMS), Websites, Library management, Finance – including billing and inventory, Human Resources including ESS (Employee Self Service) portals, Cloud based collaborative platforms i.e. Google Apps for Education and Microsoft Office 365

Andrew Walton

Andrew Walton is an experienced communications manager and creative team lead with experience at top-tier, established and growing schools alike. A licensed teacher from New Brunswick, Canada, Andrew's background is in international education and multimedia communications.

Andrew has lived in Asia for over eight years, spending two years in South Korea, and six in China. In 2012, Andrew joined the internationally-known Western Academy of Beijing (WAB) and served as the PR & Communications Manager. During his time as head of the Publications Team with WAB, Andrew led the school's website revamp and social media escalation. Andrew has since led the rebranding of two schools in China (Beanstalk International Bilingual School and APEX International School), and established the branding for Innova Academy as well as for the education management company ORIGINS Education.

Andrew brings his strengths in branding and identity, website and graphic design to his projects, while regularly helping to bridge the divide between the business and education sides of school administration by virtue of his experience on both sides of the table. A proven creative specialist and web developer, Andrew works with both physical and digital assets and a systems integration mindset to

leverage the capabilities and virtues of each, while carefully crafting the user experience across each organization's environments.

As Wildfire Solutions' Co-Founder and Creative Lead, Andrew is a champion for organizations making authentic, creative connections within their communities. He believes that organizations prime themselves for growth through honest dialogue, focusing on strengths while working to resolve issues, and by extending their resource networks. Combining his experience in communications, public relations, marketing, design and teaching, Andrew strongly believes in creating meaningful, authentic connections within school communities and is an advocate for forward-friendly application of technology and pedagogy wherever possible. Through active connections between systems and environments (both physical and virtual), Andrew argues organizations can support their own development plans, present strong branding, and promote healthy and engaged communities.



Andrew's work focuses on the various experiences that community members have while traversing the organization's physical and virtual environments. Andrew's work is centered around:

- Design of physical and virtual environments
- User experience
- Digital signage
- Video production
- Print design
- Marketing material production
- Community Portals
- Website Design and Construction
- Systems integration



Good Business is About People

“I Am Pleased to Give Him My Highest Recommendation”

Donna Connolly - Deputy Director, WAB (Retired)

In my former positions of Deputy Director and Middle School Principal at The Western Academy of Beijing, I had the opportunity to work with Muhammad for five years, ending in June 2015. During most of this time, Muhammad worked as our IT Manager, a role that is very similar to the Director of Technologies role in many schools.

I maintained a close working relationship with Muhammad as we worked on several committees and initiatives together. At all times, I knew Muhammad to be incredibly skilled in his field, focused, hardworking, calm and possessing much integrity. Despite his very multi-dimensional and demanding position, Muhammad never appeared too busy to help out someone in need.

Muhammad worked with our Senior Education Team, Business Management Team and Technology Integrators to help define the strategic direction, and implementation of our school's technology vision, innovation, and development. Through his diverse role in supporting and maintain our school's IT infrastructure, Muhammad was deeply involved in our IT budgeting, 1:1 laptop program, iPad program, teacher training, professional development, media, broadcasting, digital signage, Power School, school email system and multi-site student blogging system... to highlight just a few of his responsibilities.

Muhammad was highly respected by administration, technology integrators, teachers, support staff, students and parents alike. I am pleased to give him my highest recommendation.

Projects:

Donna worked with Muhammad (and Andrew) at the Western Academy of Beijing over a number of years.

“We Were Extremely Impressed”

Simon May - Elementary Tech Coach, American School of Warsaw

In November 2015 the American School of Warsaw requested the services of Mohammad Azeem to conduct a technology audit to gain an expert opinion of the state of the our IT infrastructure and Systems.

We were extremely impressed with Muhammad's professional and planned visit. Muhammad started his visit by meeting with all stakeholders. This provided essential feedback on how our systems are being used and identified areas where we had strengths and also areas that needed strengthening. It was clear in the meetings that he had an excellent understanding of the technical needs of schools. Muhammad has a calm professional manner that makes it easy for people to talk to him about technology and their needs.

The report that Mohammad compiled was extremely comprehensive and gave us a clear understanding of where the IT infrastructure needs to be developed. Each section of the report gave clear recommendations that we are implementing.

We received his full report within 3 days of his visit. His report has given us a solid foundation for us to move forward. We would highly recommend Muhammad to anyone who needs guidance and an expert opinion in the development of their IT Infrastructure and Systems.

Projects:

Simon worked with Muhammad during Muhammad's consultation for ASW.

“The Confidence of an Educator”

Caleb Archer – Associate Director, ORIGINS Education

As the Director of Communications Andrew has effectively led the Admissions, Marketing and Communications teams. He is a natural leader who has a great way of working with community (one of his passions), staff and students to present the best of a school, and does so with the confidence of an educator.

Andrew served as a member of the Business Management Team and understands schools both as business and learning communities. He has had input into a wide range of areas from interior design of learning spaces through to developing the visual identity of our school brand. Andrew has also contributed to the social life of the staff and I have enjoyed working with him. I wish him all the best for the future and I look forward to the chance to work with him again.

Projects:

Caleb worked with Andrew and Muhammad on projects for both ORIGINS Education and Innova Academy in Beijing. Wildfire continues in a consultation role with ORIGINS Education.

“Positive and Enthusiastic”

Lara Ronalds – PYP Coordinator, ORIGINS Education

I have had the pleasure to work with Andrew Walton via ORIGINS Education for the past year. He is a pleasure to work with as he brings an energy to the workplace that is positive and enthusiastic. He is highly creative and his commitment means that he will always solve a problem no matter how complex.

He is aware of the latest educational pedagogies and this knowledge, combined with his experience as a teacher, has a positive impact on his ability to market education as he is aware of the different roles, issues and influences within education environments. This brings an authenticity in how he markets education. He values integrity this can be seen in his work ethic and his creative expression.

It has been a pleasure to work with Andrew and I am grateful for all I have learnt from him. He is a true collaborator and this makes him a valuable team player. His thoughtful communication and creativity allows him to build ideas with others and it is a positive experience for all involved.

Projects:

Lara worked with Andrew and Muhammad on projects for both ORIGINS Education and Innova Academy in Beijing. Wildfire continues in a consultation role with ORIGINS Education.

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School Communications

VISUAL IDENTITY (VI)

- A crisp, visually appealing logo that works in color, single color and black and white across different media and usages.
- VI booklet with style guidelines for logo, color and font usage including simple rules and example usage across media types (print, merchandise, physical assets)

DIGITAL PRESENCE

- Visually appealing, fast-loading website with a responsive or mobile theme
- Social media presence on local and international platforms
- Community portal to share your school's successes and build community
- Student led media creation and integrated platforms to support upload and sharing
- Live broadcasting capabilities

BRANDED PHYSICAL ASSETS

- High quality printed school brochure that reflects your branding and contains a condensed version of your website's content
- Templates or models for event posters, banners and digital signage across events types
- School clothing for day-to-day use, sports teams, and special events
- School branded merchandise and gift items with a system for sales or distribution

Admissions and Outreach

- Digital admissions system integrated with your school's information management system
- Alumni outreach program with regular, authentic, two-way connections made with the school
- Strong communication between your front-line admissions representatives and your head of strategy for communications & marketing

Strong Infrastructure

- Fast, reliable and secure student, staff and public network access
- Professionally designed, scalable and secure data center (housing servers and network equipment)
- Hybrid servers with planning for cloud migration
- Efficient systems and platforms which integrate and address the specific needs of your organization
- 1:1 or 2:1 BYOD programs with streamlined management and IT support services
- Service Level Agreements, as well as policies and protocols for change management

Technology Integration

- Established paths for the introduction of new technologies and systems into learning processes
- A feature-rich and engaging learning management system
- Continuous professional development for staff
- Significant digital citizenship training for your entire school community
- Online portfolios for publishing and celebrating media-rich student work

Self-Assessment Scoring Guide

0-15: There is much to be done. Strategic work on the highest impact items from this list will make a big impact on your school's presence.

16-21: There are still gains still to be made, but you are off to a good start. Look to developing those areas which bring your community together while addressing both the school's business and educational needs.

21-25: We would expect to see your school amongst the leaders in many respects. Continue to build on these foundations and be sure to share all the exciting things that are going on in your school.

Ready for the next step?

Contact Wildfire to Push to the Front of the Pack.